

## Message Text

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21

ACTION SS-25

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O R 090417Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3248

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 7583

EXDIS

DEPTO 05

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ACON OAS

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH COLOMBIAN FOREIGN MINISTER LIEVANO

1. ROGERS AND MAILLIARD DISCUSSED WITH COLOMBIAN FOREIGN MINISTER LIEVANO THE PROSPECTS FOR THE COSTA RICA/COLOMBIA/ VENEZUELA PROPOSAL FOR LIFTING SANCTIONS IN A PRIVATE CONVERSATION NOVEMBER 8. LIEVANO SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE U.S. DECISION OF NEUTRALITY ON THE WASHINGTON DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE CO-SPONSORS. BUT HE SAID THAT IF THAT FORMULA HAS NOT OBTAINED THE REQUIRED 14 VOTES WITHIN A COUPLE OF DAYS, A FORMULA SIMILAR TO THAT PROPOSED BY PERU IN MID-1972, WHICH DECLARED THAT EACH NATION IS FREE TO RESUME COMMERCIAL AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, MIGHT BE ADVANCED. HE SAID HE THOUGHT THAT SUCH A FORMULA WOULD OBTAIN 15 OR 16 VOTES, AS COMPARED WITH THE 12 OR 13 HE FELT THE PRESENT FORMULA HAD. HE ASKED FOR THE U.S. REACTION.

2. ROGERS SAID THAT THE U.S. HAS MAINTAINED STRICT NEUTRALITY, MAKING CERTAIN THAT IT COULD NOT BE ACCUSED OF EXERTING INFLUENCE ON THE OUTCOME. AT THIS POINT OUR REACTION TO THE FREEDOM OF ACTION FORMULA WOULD BE THE SAME AS TO THE PRESENT DRAFT.

3. LIEVANO SAID THAT FAILURE BY THE MFM TO LIFT THE SANCTIONS WOULD BE A VICTORY BY CASTRO, WHO WOULD LIKE TO SEE A BREAKDOWN  
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OF THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM. LIEVANO SAID THAT FAILURE TO

LIFT THE SANCTIONS WOULD CAUSE SUCH A BREAKDOWN, SINCE A MAJORITY OF OAS MEMBERS WOULD SOON RESUME RELATIONS WITH CUBA UNILATERALLY, REGARDLESS OF THE OUTCOME OF THE MEETING. LIEVANO SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE U.S. INTEREST TO BE SERVED BY A STRONG INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM. FURTHERMORE, HE SAID, IF SANCTIONS ARE NOT LIFTED, HE EXPECTED THAT LATIN COUNTRIES WITH DISPUTES WITH THE U.S. WOULD USE THE CUBA RELATIONS ISSUE AS BLACKMAIL OR REPRISAL AGAINST THE U.S. LATER IN THE CONVERSATION, LIEVANO EMPHASIZED THAT THE BREAKDOWN OF RIO TREATY WOULD SERIOUSLY WEAKEN THE SYSTEM'S CAPACITY FOR HANDLING BILATERAL CONFLICTS SUCH AS CHILE/PERU. LIEVANO THEN PLEADED THAT WE BEGIN TO CONTEMPLATE THE NEED TO REVISE OUR POSITION IF, BY MONDAY, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE STARK ALTERNATIVE WAS A FAILURE OF THE QUITO MEETING, FOLLOWED SHORTLY BY THE DESERTION OF SEVERAL ADDITIONAL COUNTRIES. WE SAID WE HAD EVERY CONFIDENCE IN THE SPONSORS OWN EFFORTS, AND HOPED THAT THE CIRCUMSTANCE HE DESCRIBED WOULD REMAIN HYPOTHETICAL. HE AGREED WE WERE NOT AT THAT POINT, YET.

4. ROGERS ASKED WHETHER THE U.S. POSITION OF NEUTRALITY WAS GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD. LIEVANO RESPONDED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT AND OTHER FOREIGN OFFICES UNDERSTOOD THE U.S. POSITION VERY WELL. THE LATIN AMERICAN PUBLIC, HOWEVER, LOOKED UPON U.S. NEUTRALITY AS A WAY OF KEEPING THE RESOLUTION FROM OBTAINING THE 14TH VOTE. WHETHER JUSTIFIED OR NOT, FAILURE OF THE QUITO MFM WOULD BE BLAMED ON THE U.S.

5. COMMENT: IT IS INTERESTING THAT LIEVANO DWELT MORE ON THE FREEDOM OF ACTION FORMULA THAN FACIO DID IN A CONVERSATION WITH ROGERS AND MAILLIARD, NOVEMBER 7. (REF QUITO 7571) THE ESTIMATE OF 15 OR 16 VOTES FOR THAT FORMULA SEEMS EXCESSIVELY OPTIMISTIC TO US, WHICH LIEVANO SEEMED TO RECOGNIZE IMPLICITLY IN APPEALING SO STRONGLY FOR U.S. SUPPORT. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT LIEVANO'S ESTIMATE THAT A MAJORITY OF OAS MEMBERS WILL ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH CUBA IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS AS SOMEWHAT OF AN EXAGGERATION, THOUGH THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT SEVERAL COUNTRIES WILL RESTORE RELATIONS EVEN IF THE SANCTIONS ARE NOT REMOVED.

6. THE CONVERSATION WAS VERY FRIENDLY AND THERE IS EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO COOPERATE WITH COLOMBIA THROUGHOUT THE MEETING.  
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## Message Attributes

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